

# **Capturing the Benefits of Open Access in Interlibrary Loan**

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## **Abstract**

Though many think primarily of journal articles when discussing open access (OA), there are other document types that can fall under the basic definition of OA such as electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs), conference papers, and reports. Sources of these OA materials abound – institutional repositories, subject repositories, OA journals, organization websites – the list goes on and on. While the sheer number of sources may seem overwhelming, locating OA materials to fill requests provides real benefits to interlibrary loan (ILL) departments. OA allows the fulfillment of requests for materials traditionally difficult to obtain; fills requests quickly without external intervention; and eliminates the cost of borrowing. In order to capture these benefits, ILL practitioners must prioritize their options and streamline the OA workflow. This paper will provide recommendations on how to develop a customized OA workflow that best fits your ILL department.

## **Introduction**

Though many think primarily of journal articles when discussing open access (OA), there are other document types that can fall under the basic definition of OA: “digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions” (Suber). Sources of these OA materials abound including OA journals, organization websites, and institutional, subject, and mass digitization repositories, among others. While the sheer number of sources may seem overwhelming, locating OA materials to fill requests provides real benefits to interlibrary loan (ILL) departments. OA allows the fulfillment of requests for materials traditionally difficult to obtain; fills requests quickly without external intervention; and reduces the cost of borrowing to staff time.

Open access material encompasses several document types that are generally difficult to borrow via traditional ILL. Among these are documents typically unpublished such as conference papers and white papers as well as those not widely collected such as reports, theses, and dissertations. Theses and dissertations are especially notorious for being hard to obtain since hard copies are often housed in special collections and non-circulating from the granting institutions. The advent of electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) has made it much easier to locate and obtain OA copies for library users. Rather than leave requests for all of these materials unfilled, an ILL practitioner can utilize OA versions to increase fill rates and user satisfaction.

Open access also increase the speed with which some requests can be filled. By searching for likely open access materials prior to submitting requests to other libraries, ILL practitioners can reduce the turnaround time for these requests and alleviate the workload of other libraries. You are a better ILL partner and provide better customer service through the delivery of easily located OA documents.

In addition to making you a better partner to other libraries, utilizing OA materials reduces the cost of filling these requests for your own library. Instead of potentially paying borrowing fees, ILL practitioners can obtain OA documents free of charge with the only cost being a minimum of staff time. In summary, the key benefits of OA to ILL are fulfillment, speed and lower cost.

In order to capture these benefits, ILL practitioners must prioritize their options and streamline the OA workflow. This paper will provide recommendations on how to develop a customized OA workflow that best fits your ILL department with a focus on pre-searching (e.g. searching prior to submission to potential supplying libraries). Though some of the recommendations herein are specific to the OCLC ILLiad ILL management system, the majority have wide applicability.

### **Literature Review**

There are many articles on overall evaluation of interlibrary loan workflows and efficiency. Some recent articles have addressed the assessment of ILL staffing (Harris-Keith) and streamlining and consolidating ILL and document delivery workflows (Moreno). With the increasing popularity of patron-driven acquisitions, a number of articles have been written with a focus on purchase on demand workflows within ILL including those by Bertuca et al. and Herrera and Greenwood. There is also the rich resource of the IDS Project's Workflow Toolkit for ILLiad libraries (IDS Project). However, the author could locate no articles focused specifically on the creation of an open access workflow in interlibrary loan.

The author has made a study of ILL requests for open access materials and has published two previous articles on the topic (Baich 2011, Baich 2015). These studies have found that users continue to request OA documents despite their ability to locate and obtain them directly thus establishing the importance of a mechanism to deal with these requests. A thorough discussion of IUPUI University Library's open access workflows can also be found in these articles.

### **Establishing Parameters**

The first step in determining your department's OA workflow is establishing the parameters for what you will search prior to submitting to another library ("pre-searching"). These parameters may depend on a variety of factors including volume of requests, number of staff, time devoted to ILL and the ILL system being used. While it is not feasible to search every request for an OA version, there are categories of material that would likely incur benefits. The most obvious of these are items with a pre-1923 publication date and theses and dissertations. Other categories to consider are conference papers and reports.

If you have a low volume of requests and the time to devote to searching, you might also consider pre-searching article requests. However, systematically searching all article requests will yield less benefit at this point in the life of OA publishing. To include articles in an OA workflow, consider limiting article searching according to specific criteria such as publication year and subject. More recent articles are more likely to have an OA version as are articles in subject areas where OA has a greater acceptance rate such as physics or those with large amounts of federal funding such as medicine.

If you are an ILLiad user, you can use the parameters you've established to create routing rules that will isolate these requests in their own queue. For example, you have decided to only pre-search requests for material that falls into the public domain. In this instance, you would create a routing rule based on the date of publication (see fig. 1). You also have to create a custom queue to accompany the routing rule (see fig. 2). All of this is done in the ILLiad Customization Manager. For more detailed instructions, refer to the ILLiad documentation (Atlas Systems<sup>1</sup>).

<b>RuleNo</b>	1
<b>RuleActive</b>	Yes
<b>ProcessType</b>	Borrowing
<b>TransactionStatus</b>	Awaiting Request Processing
<b>MatchString</b>	((t.LoanDate < '1923') or (t.PhotoJournalYear < '1923'))
<b>NewProcessType</b>	Borrowing
<b>NewTransactionStatus</b>	Awaiting Public Domain Searching
<b>RuleDescription</b>	This rule moves all requests with a pre-1923 publication date into an Awaiting Public Domain Searching queue.

Fig. 1. Example ILLiad routing rule for public domain materials

<b>QueueName</b>	Awaiting Public Domain Searching
<b>ProcessType</b>	Borrowing
<b>NVTGC</b>	ILL

Fig. 2. Example ILLiad custom queue to accompany a public domain routing rule

Once you have determined the parameters for pre-searching, think about how this activity will fit into your already established workflows. The goal is to create a streamlined OA workflow that requires a minimum of extra work or divergence from standard procedures. You may find it helpful to create a flowchart showing how potential OA requests should be handled (see Fig. 3).

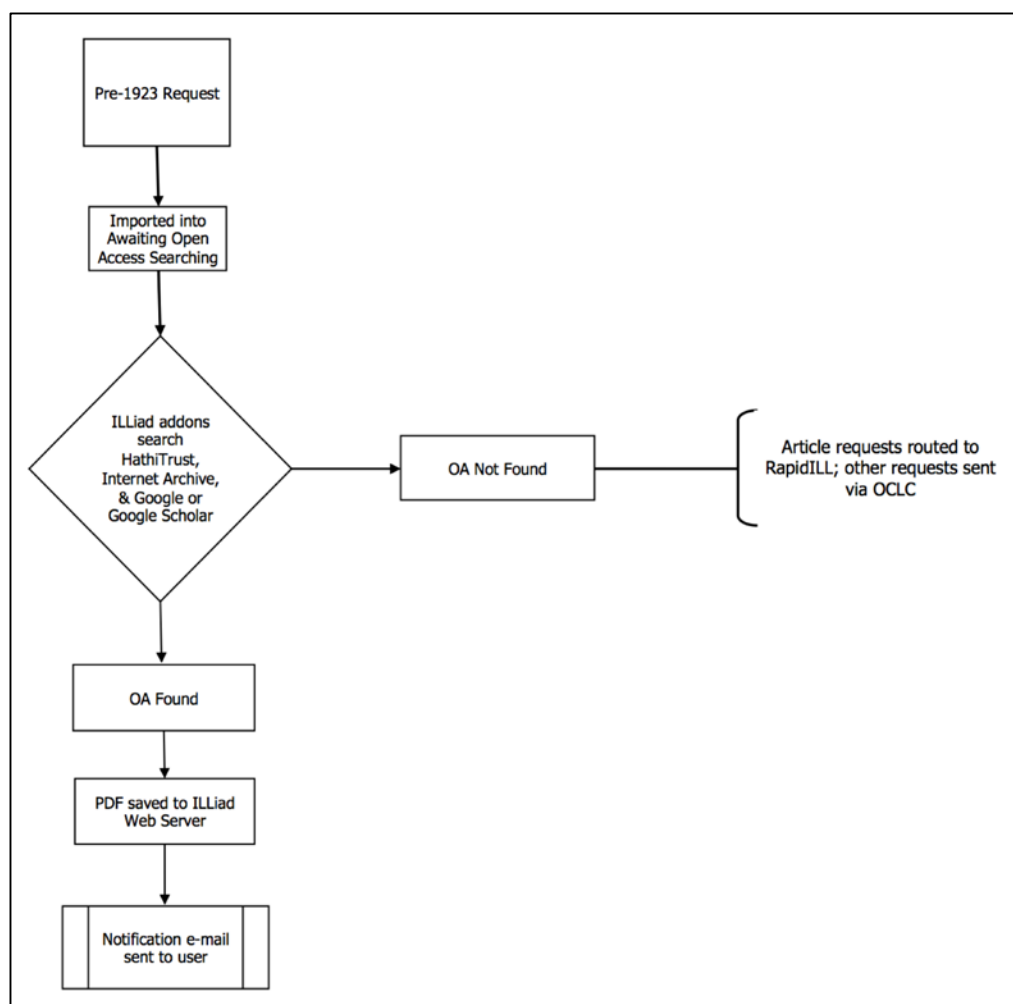


Fig. 3. Example workflow flowchart

### Search Techniques and Resources

For ILLiad users, a number of addons are available to assist you with OA searching. After enabling addons including Google Books, Google Scholar, HathiTrust, and Internet Archive, these websites will appear as tabs within the request form. You can configure the addons to automatically execute the searches saving the time of cutting and pasting titles. Determining whether there is an OA version of a specific item from one of these sources is then just a matter of clicking through these tabs. ILLiad addons can be downloaded from the ILLiad Addons Directory (Atlas Systems<sup>2</sup>).

ILLiad libraries can reduce the amount of pre-searching required for articles requests by implementing the WorldCat Knowledge Base (WCKB), which includes a number of open access collections. When a request is sent via Direct Request for Articles for an open access title in the WCKB, it is returned to the ILLiad client with a link to the material rather than being sent to potential suppliers. More information about implementing the WCKB and Direct Request for

Articles can be found on the OCLC website and the ILLiad documentation (OCLC<sup>2</sup>, Atlas Systems<sup>1</sup>).

WorldShare ILL includes “View Now” links for open access journals and magazines at the point of discovery. These links are populated using data from the WorldCat Knowledge Base. For other types of materials, you will need to consider an alternate workflow for pre-searching. To see an overview of how to fill OA requests using WorldShare ILL “View Now” links, the author recommends viewing OCLC’s “Borrower: Open Access Fulfillment in WorldShare ILL” online tutorial (OCLC<sup>1</sup>).

There are still options for those without one of these ILL systems or for those that want to supplement the WorldShare ILL functionality. One is to rely exclusively on Google Scholar, which will reveal a great deal of OA materials. However, if you find that this method misses categories of OA items frequently requested or wish to be more thorough in your pre-searching, you may want to consult additional sources. In this case, the author suggests choosing a secondary browser with a number of preset tabs. Determine which sites you want to use in your OA searching and set these as home pages in the browser’s preferences. Though you may not use every site for each request, having preset tabs will save staff time in navigating to each commonly-used website.

## **Communicating with Users**

### ***What to Communicate***

Before you even begin communicating with users about OA requests, you have to determine what you are going to communicate. First, to what extent will you use your communication as an educational opportunity? Many users are still unfamiliar with the various aspects of OA. When you inform a user that his request was for an OA document, you can take the opportunity to explain what OA is, potential differences in versions, the specific repository in which you found the document and/or how to search for OA documents himself. Alternatively, you can choose to merely tell the user the document is freely available and leave OA education to your subject librarians.

Second, what are you delivering to your user through your communication? When choosing how to deliver OA documents to users, there are two options: 1) deliver the actual PDF or 2) deliver a link to the content. Whether or not to deliver the PDF may depend on several factors including the comparative ease with which you are able to deliver a PDF versus a link and your assessment of the legality of the posting of the material. You may also choose to deliver a link to the item’s page within a repository rather than directly to the PDF as a means of educating your user about OA and OA repositories.

### ***How to Communicate***

The simplest and most common way to communicate with ILL users is, of course, e-mail. Based on your earlier workflow choices, you may choose to create one or more templates related to open access materials. For instance, you may want a template specific to ETDs, especially for

graduate students who you may want to educate about the existence of ETDs for their future research as well as make them aware of your library's own ETD program. You could also create a separate template for the author's manuscript version of articles that provides an explanation that the item to which you are referring the user is not the final, published version and offering to obtain the published version if it is required (see fig. 4). Alternatively, one simple all-encompassing template may be enough if you don't deem educating your users about OA to be your role.

<p>Dear Library User,</p> <p>We located an open access version of the following item you requested at URL.</p> <p>This version of the article is the author's manuscript and may vary slightly from the final, published version. If you require the final, published version, please resubmit your request including a note indicating that need.</p> <p>ARTICLE AUTHOR ARTICLE TITLE JOURNAL TITLE ARTICLE YEAR</p> <p>If you have questions about this request, please contact us at ILL@library.edu.</p> <p>Thank you for using XYZ Library's Interlibrary Loan service.</p> <p>Sincerely, ILL Staff</p>
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Fig. 4. Example Author's Manuscript E-mail Template

If you are not using an ILL management system such as ILLiad, you can still create e-mail templates within common e-mail systems. Gmail has a feature called "Canned Responses" that can be activated in the Labs tab under Settings. Once this feature is enabled, you can compose your e-mail template, and then select "More Options" at the bottom of the message to save your message as a new "Canned Response." When you want to use the template, begin a message and select "More Options" to navigate to and insert your "Canned Response." There are numerous videos on YouTube that can guide you through this process including <https://youtu.be/9zjXCE1UVIE> (HowToCreator).

It is also possible to create e-mail templates in Microsoft Outlook. Compose your message, then "Save As" an Outlook Template. When you are ready to use your Outlook Template, select "More Items" from the New Item menu and click on "Choose Form." A window will open with a "Look In" dropdown menu at the top. Select "User Templates in File System" from that menu and then select your desired template from the list that appears. Open your template to make any

needed adjustments and send. You can also easily save your Outlook Template to a shared location so that all ILL staff have access to it.

Though OCLC's WorldShare ILL doesn't allow for the creation of e-mail templates within the system, you can still create simple text file templates that can be easily copied and pasted into the standard WorldShare ILL e-mail before sending. ILLiad, however, gives you the ability to create multiple e-mail routing templates that are accessible directly from a request. These templates can also include tags to automatically import request information. Beginning with ILLiad 8.6, all e-mail templates are stored in the ILLiad Customization Manager. To create a new e-mail routing template, click New on the Notification Templates tab within the ILLiad Customization Manager. Complete the needed fields and compose your message, then Save (see fig. 5).

<b>Name:</b>	OpenAccess	<b>NVTGC:</b>	ILL
<b>Description:</b>	Email to tell users their request is filled via Open Access.		
<b>From Name:</b>	Interlibrary Loan	<b>From Address:</b>	<#LocalInfo.GeneralEmailAddress>
<b>To Name:</b>		<b>To Address:</b>	<#User.EmailAddress>
<b>CC Address:</b>		<b>BCC Address:</b>	
<b>Subject:</b>	Your ILL Request is Available		

Dear <#User.FirstName> <#User.LastName>,

The following item that you requested through Interlibrary Loan was found freely available on the internet:

<#Transaction.PhotoJournalTitle>  
 Vol. <#Transaction.PhotoJournalVolume>, no. <#Transaction.PhotoJournalIssue>:  
 (<#Transaction.PhotoJournalYear>), pp. <#Transaction.PhotoJournalInclusivePages>

Title: <#Transaction.PhotoArticleTitle><#Transaction.LoanTitle>  
 Author: <#Transaction.PhotoArticleAuthor><#Transaction.LoanAuthor>

We have made it conveniently available for download from your ILLiad account. You can access it by clicking here:  
<https://ill.library.edu/ILLiad/NVTGC/pdf/<#Transaction.TransactionNumber>.pdf>  
 or by logging into your ILLiad account:  
<https://ill.library.edu/ILLiad/NVTGC/logon.html>

You can also view the item at the following URL: <#Transaction.CallNumber>

If you have any questions about this service, please contact us and refer to the Transaction Number TN: <#Transaction.TransactionNumber>.

Thank you for using Interlibrary Loan, please let us know how we are doing, we appreciate your feedback.

Sincerely,

ILL Staff
Please e-mail us at: <#LocalInfo.GeneralEMailAddress> or Tel: <#LocalInfo.GeneralPhone>

Fig 5. Example ILLiad Open Access E-mail Routing Template

In addition to creating the ILLiad e-mail routing template, you must create an e-mail routing rule to tell ILLiad what to do with the request after the e-mail is sent. An example routing rule is below (see fig. 6). More detailed instructions for creating e-mail routing templates and e-mail routing rules with the ILLiad Customization Manager are available in the online ILLiad documentation (Atlas Systems).

<b>ProcessType</b>	Borrowing
<b>Name</b>	Open Access
<b>DefaultToAddress</b>	
<b>DefaultToName</b>	
<b>DefaultCCAddress</b>	
<b>DefaultSubject</b>	
<b>DefaultFromAddress</b>	
<b>DefaultFromName</b>	
<b>DefaultStatus</b>	Request Finished
<b>LoanTemplate</b>	OpenAccess
<b>ArticleTemplate</b>	OpenAccess
<b>NVTGC</b>	ILL

Fig. 6. Example Open Access E-mail Routing Rule

### Statistics

Libraries differ in how they count OA requests. Some choose to consider these requests as cancelled while others count them as filled borrowing requests. The author recommends counting them as filled requests because staff have used their time and expertise to locate the content on behalf of the user as they would with any other borrowing request. Regardless of whether your department considers OA requests as filled or cancelled, it is important to establish a mechanism for tracking requests for OA materials. If you choose to cancel OA requests, create a specific OA cancellation reason. If you choose to count OA requests as filled, establish a lender code for these requests. With this in place, you can generate reports on OA requests. Being able to track OA cancellations provides a means of explaining a change in fill rate while requests filled by an “open” lender can show time and money saved. You may also find it useful to make note of the repository in which each request is found.

Additionally, you should review your statistics for the most commonly requested OA content. You may find that your users frequently request a certain kind of OA document or that you locate the majority of OA requests in a handful of repositories. You can utilize this information to revise your OA workflow to more easily identify these materials and focus pre-searching.



Additionally, data from OA request reports can guide the creation of education pieces for users to assist them with locating these materials independently. You can also share this information with subject librarians to enhance their services. For example, if you frequently receive requests for ETDs, it would be beneficial to students for a discussion of ETD repositories to be included in instruction and research consultation sessions.

## Conclusion

The overall goal is to achieve a balance between alternative workflows and the benefits of open access. If the OA workflow is overly complicated or diverges too greatly from existing workflows, the benefits of utilizing OA materials begin to diminish. By implementing some or all of the recommendations discussed here, ILL departments can streamline and improve open access workflows to capture the benefits of fulfillment, speed and lower cost that OA brings to ILL. Open access also simplifies the work of both borrowing and lending libraries, provides quality service to users, and can even be a means of educating users about the growing world of open access and changes in scholarly communication.

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